



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **L.A. COUNTY JOINS CITY TO OPPOSE NEW PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

At the urging of Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chairman Mark Ridley-Thomas, Los Angeles County Tuesday joined with the City of Los Angeles to oppose a June 2014 ballot initiative that seeks to create a public health department to be run by the city.

The initiative, if passed, would compel both the county and city to terminate the contracts for the management of public health services within the city and require the City of L.A. to create a completely new public health department within a mere 120 days.

The Los Angeles City Council opposes the measure, as does the Mayor. Also, the chief executives of both the city and county have concluded that the new bureaucracy would greatly diminish public health services while dramatically increasing costs to residents. Calling the proposition a foolish and irresponsible move that would squander taxpayers' dollars, Supervisor Ridley-Thomas noted the excellence with which the county health department has performed.

“Since 1903, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health has proven its effectiveness in confronting health challenges ranging from food safety to polio and HIV/AIDS throughout the entire county. DPH’s successes in widespread prevention, education and treatment are considered models for public health efforts around the world and validated by ongoing recognition from the federal government,” said Supervisor Ridley-Thomas. “Furthermore,

creating a city public health department would be rolling back the clock on important progress made in combatting outbreaks and epidemics.”

“Flu epidemics, viral infections, salmonella outbreaks, HIV/AIDS and a host of other public health challenges do not respect city borders,” the Supervisor said. “These will always be regional challenges that affect the 10 million residents of the county, not just the 4 million who live within the city lines. As such, it is both sensible and fiscally prudent that such health crises are managed with a regional approach.”

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